

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 NIC-01

CU-04 OPR-02 JUSE-00 SCA-01 PPT-02 PER-05 A-01 DRC-01

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P R 022210Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6667

INFO USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 1285

USIA FOR ILA

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, CS

SUBJECT: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY APPROVES MOTION TO
INVESTIGATE EMBASSY ACTIVITIES

REF: SAN JOSE 1267

1. FOLLOWING AN ACRIMONIOUS DEBATE APRIL 1, THE
COSTA RICAN LEGISLATURE APPROVED A MOTION PRESENTED BY
OFFICIAL PARTY (PLN) DEPUTY MANUEL CEMBALLO QUINTANA
CALLING ON FOREIGN MINISTRY TO INVESTIGATE THE INTER-
VENTION OF U.S. EMBASSY OFFICIALS IN THE RECENT
STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST THE EXTRADITION LAW.
CARBALLO DREDGED UP EVERYTHING HE COULD THINK OF IN JUSTIFYING
HIS CALL FOR AN INVESTIGATION. HE MENTIONED PRESENCE OF
ALCOA, STANDARD FRUIT'S RESISTANCE TO THE BANANA TAX, AND
U.S. INVESTMENTS IN BEACHES AS EXAMPLES OF PERNICIOUS, U.S.
IMPERIALISTIC PRESENCE IN COSTA RICA. HE READ AN ARTICLE
FROM THE COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER "LIBERTAD" WHICH CLAIMED
ATTORNEY GENERAL SAXBE HAD RECENTLY COME TO COSTA RICA
TO NEGOTIATE VESCO'S RETURN AND A "HIGH LEVEL INTELLIGENCE
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AGENT NAMED PETER MACK" HAD ALSO BEEN SENT DOWN TO

WORK ON THE VESCO MATTER. CARBALLO RHETORICALLY ASKED WHERE THE STUDENTS WERE GETTING THE MONEY TO MOUNT THESE DEMONSTRATIONS, IMPLYING CLEARLY IT CAME FROM FOREIGN INTERESTS.

2. CARBALLO'S ARGUMENT WAS SUPPORTED BY COMMUNIST DEPUTY MANUEL MORA, THEN DREW AN ANGRY RESPONSE FROM MAVERICK LXAN DEPUTY JENARO VALVERDE MARIN. VALVERDE MARIN, WHO WAS SENT OUT OF THE COUNTRY (SOME BELIEVE DELIBERATELY) DURING THE PASSAGE OF THE EXTRADITION BILL WHICH HE OPPOSED, SAID HE WOULD VOTE FOR CARBALLO'S REMOVAL BECAUSE ANY ACCUSATION OF FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS DESERVED INVESTIGATION BUT, HE ARGUED, HIS APPROVAL SHOULD NOT BE READ AS APPROBATION OF THE EXTRADITION LAW. HE CHARACTERIZED THE EXTRADITION LAW AS OBVIOUSLY IN BENEFIT OF ROBERT VESCO. ANOTHER OPPOSITION DEPUTY, AGUILAR PERALTA READ LAWYER FRANCISCO CATILLO'S CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE LAW IN HIS SPEECH ATTACKING CARBALLO'S JUSTIFICATION OF THE INVESTIGATORY MOTION.

3. PRESS COVERAGE THIS MORNING, APRIL 2, OF THE DEBATE OVER THE CARBALLO QUINTANT MOTION WAS LIMITED IN "LA NACION" TO ROUTINE INSIDE SPACE. "LA REPUBLICA" FRONT PAGED THE STORY UNDER TITLE, "ASSEMBLY ASKS FOR INVESTIGATION OF STUDENT VIOLENCE." THE ARTICLE, WHICH PLAYED THE STORY STRAIGHT, QUOTES EMBASSY OFFICER CORRECTLY AS SAYING, "THE EMBASSY MANIFESTED ITS NATURAL CONCERN ABOUT THE EXTRADITION LAW TO GOVERNMENTAL OFFICIALS WHILE IT WAS MOVING, IN BILL FORM, THROUGH THE ASSEMBLY."

4. IN RESPONSE TO THE APPROVED INVESTIGATORY MOTION, THE EMBASSY HAS PUT OUT THE FOLLOWING PRESS RELEASE: "THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA CATEGORICALLY DENIES THAT IT HAS IN ANY WAY INCITED OR ENCOURAGED PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROTESTS OF ANY KIND AGAINST THE NEW COSTA RICAN EXTRADITION LAW. THE EMBASSY WAS INDEED CONCERNED ABOUT SEVERAL ASPECTS OF THE EXTRADITION BILL, AND PRIOR TO THE BILL'S ENACTMENT MADE THESE CONCERNS KNOWN TO OFFICIALS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF COSTA RICA. THE EMBASSY WELCOMES AND WILL BE HAPPY TO COLLABORATE WITH THE PROPOSED INVESTIGATION OF CONFIDENTIAL

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ITS ACTIVITIES IN COSTA RICA." OUR STATEMENT SHOULD BE ON RADIO THROUGHOUT THE DAY APRIL 2, IN THE PAPERS APRIL 3, AND HOPEFULLY WILL HAVE SOME DETERRENT EFFECT ON ANY STUDENTS WHO MAY BE PLANNING TO DEMONSTRATE AGAINST THE EMBASSY AS COUNTERPOINT TO DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE EXTRADITION LAW ON APRIL 2 AT 4 P.M.

5. THE INVESTIGATORY MOTION IS DIRECTED AT THE FOREIGN

MINISTRY FOR ACTION. THE CHARGE HAS AN APPOINTMENT WITH FOREIGN MINISTER FACIO ON APRIL 3 TO DISCUSS THE MATTER FURTHER.

6. COMMENT: THE PLN MOTION TO INVESTIGATE THE EMBASSY IS CURIOUS FOR ITS ABSENCE OF SUBSTANCE. PREVIOUS INDICATIONS HAD SUGGESTED THAT THE ASSEMBLY DEBATE WOULD FOCUS MOSTLY ON THE EMBASSY'S ALLEGED LOBBYING ACTIVITIES IN THE LEGISLATURE AGAINST THE EXTRADITION BILL AND ONLY SECONDARILY AGAINST THE CLAIM THAT U.S. OFFICIALS ARE BEHIND THE STUDENTS. BY NOT CONTAINING THE LOBBYING ASPECT THEE CLAIM HAS BECOME LARGELY A GOERNMENT EFFORT TO DISCREDIT

AND WEAKEN THE STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS BY AFFILIATING THEM WITH THE STUDENTS' TRADITIONAL BETE NOIR, BUT THE CHANCES THAT MANY PEOPLE ARE CONVINCED THAT THE U.S. IS REALLY PROVOKING THE HIGH SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TO PROTEST AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT IS SLIGHT. AS JENARO VALVERDE PUT IT AT ONE POINT IN THE DEBATE, "LET'S BE HONEST ABOUT THIS-- WE DO NOT REALLY THINK THE UNITED STATES IS MIXED UP WITH THE STUDENTS".

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